

Rogovin Is Quitting As Anticrime Chief

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The head of the Nixon administration's chief anticrime effort is resigning because of what he regards as a snarled bureaucracy and policy differences that have seriously undermined the program.

Charles H. Rogovin's letter of resignation as administrator of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration already has been sent to the President, the Los Angeles Times learned yesterday.

In the letter, he said he was stepping down because the troika directorship of the agency has hampered the multi-million dollar program badly. The agency is headed by three men—the administrator and two associate administrators—and Rogovin interprets the law to mean they must all agree on major decisions. This has made it impossible for Rogovin to resolve important policy differences with his two colleagues.

Rogovin's departure, set for June, is likely to trigger other resignations at the infant agency, whose \$480 million budget for the coming year is larger than that of any other Justice Department entity, including the FBI.

Rogovin, whom President Nixon appointed in February, 1969, declined to comment. But an administration source confirmed that the resignation letter arrived at the White House on Tuesday.

The agency was created by the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to channel hundreds of millions of dollars to upgrade state and local police, courts and prisons. Attorney General John N. Mitchell is known to regard the agency as the government's most effective tool for curbing street crime.

Word of Rogovin's impending departure spread rapidly through LEAA yesterday, and it was learned that Henry S. Ruth Jr., director of the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, an arm of the Rogovin agency also plans to resign soon.

Sources said conflicts between Rogovin and the two associate administrators, Richard W. Velde and Clarence M. Coster, delayed hiring key personnel for the

decision—over what kind of law enforcement programs should be funded.

As first proposed by the Johnson administration, the agency was to be headed by a single director.

But a coalition of Southern Democrats and Republicans in the Senate amended the bill to provide for the troika setup, stipulating that only two of the three administrators could come from the same political party.

Rogovin, 39, is a Democrat. He was a Massachusetts assistant attorney general who helped create an effective organized crime investigative unit there. He also served as an assistant director of the President's crime commission.

Velde, 38, the son of former Rep. Harold Velde (R-Ill.), was legislative aide to Sen. Roman Hruska (R-Neb.) when President Nixon named him an associate administrator. He is a Republican.

Coster, 41, also a Republican, was police chief of Bloomington, Minn., when he was picked.